



Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association

جمعية صداقة
كامدن أبو ديس

Linking together for human rights

Statement by Trustees of CADFA (Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association) 20th May 2024

In response to the Telegraph's article on 11th May and the Jewish Chronicle article on May 14th 2024 about our ad in the Camden New Journal.

- (1) CADFA is a human rights charity, whose charitable object is to promote human rights and respect for international humanitarian law in relation to Palestine. The very first thing that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says is that

"..the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind .."

Again, article 2: our emphasis: **"*Everyone* is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status."**

We completely believe this and act on it.

- (2) We are not a 'pro-Palestinian group' as the Telegraph calls us: we are a charity responding to the current need of a group of people who have been and are being misused. As we tell our Palestinian friends, although we are friends and there are many things we like about Palestine, we stand with them and for their rights as human beings not because they are Palestinians and would be standing up particularly for the rights of Black people in the time of apartheid in South Africa or for Jewish people at the time of Nazism.
- (3) We find ourselves in an extraordinarily terrible time, when Gaza has been bombed savagely for seven months, its people moved from place to place, are being shot and shelled and starved; killed, orphaned, maimed; forced to drink dirty water, deprived of health care with all the hospitals bombed; deprived of education, when most schools and all universities have been bombed; with academics, doctors, journalists, artists, aid workers including UN staff killed, ancient buildings destroyed along with a huge

percentage of housing; with drones and artificial intelligence, white phosphorous and all sorts of ordinance used against human beings with no protection.

- (4) By now there are 40,000 people known to be killed and very many more dead under the rubble, dead from war-related reasons, shot after arrest, very many more than that disabled for life, traumatised for life, homeless. Children are being born without medical help when needed. Amputations are taking place with no anaesthetic. Children as well as adults are malnourished and this will affect their development for years. The air is full of poisonous metals and gases. None of the human rights or protections that they should have had are in place. We are probably seeing less than there is to see: over a hundred journalists have been killed. In a very disturbed world, we have not seen worse in our times.
- (5) South Africa brought a case to the International Court of Justice based not only on the mass killing in Gaza but on the extraordinary, public incitement from Israeli politicians. The court agreed that 'genocide' seems plausible; the court will now work its way slowly through a legal case. In the meantime, they told Israel to desist from genocidal acts. However, Israel does not choose to listen to the ICJ or to the UN or to any pressure for a ceasefire. Tens of thousands of people have been killed since that judgement; we have continued to see the glee on the faces of soldiers who are doing the most inhumane things, seen soldiers stand by while Israeli settlers block aid trucks or set them on fire. Based on the sheer scale of death, moving people around, inconsideration for the reproductive rights of mothers in Gaza, the (recorded) scheming of settlers who look forward to taking over Gaza, "genocide" seems factual and the need to stop it is urgent.
- (6) We have been working in the West Bank for over twenty years and have recorded the terrible violations of human rights that affect every aspect of people's lives. We used this term 'apartheid' carefully, based on what we could see was happening, and well before respected organisations like Amnesty, Human Rights Watch, B'tselem showed the world that apartheid is in place.
- (7) We use the terms 'apartheid' and 'genocide' in a calm and factual way and (though we are very sad that they are needed) not in an emotive way. It is an offensive slur on our good name to suggest that these terms are used as a result of anti-semitism. Our Jewish members are some of those insulted by this suggestion.
- (8) We note that in both newspapers, a photograph of only a part of our ad is shown. Not shown to their readers is a sentence saying, "anyone who believes in equality and human rights is welcome". We believe that this gives an indication of our approach the importance of equal rights to us, and that it gives the lie to any suggestion that we are racist or anti-semitic.
- (9) We agree with a Palestinian who said, in response to these articles, "I would like to see an end to playing games with words while people are dying every moment all over Palestine due to the clear violations by the occupation – and this has gone on at least 76 years. The British government must also stop its double standards in regard to human rights and international humanitarian law."

(10) We believe that our work has never been more important. In front of us we see a strong example of the UDHR's reason for being: that

“disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind.”

The urgent thing at this terrible time is to achieve a situation where human rights are in place and the barbarous acts end.

CADFA Trustees May 2024